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First to Last—the Truth: News—Editorials —Advertisements

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Surrender or Nothing

On Thursday the German War Council—head of the Hohenzollern dynasty presiding, Hindenburg present—took the least warlike prince that could be found in the empire, made him Imperial Chancellor and charged him to procure a peace. It is now reported via Holland that he has proposed a cessation of hostilities and the appointment of plenipotentiaries to meet in a neutral place and discuss terms. It is reported also that he offers terms on behalf of Germany—definite terms for the first time, wherein it appears the enemy is willing to give up what he is unable much longer to hold, provided the German colonies are restored.

This is the criminal offering terms—the same Germany that began the war and risked her existence to gain the whole world. The answer is already written. "We cannot," said President Wilson, "take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure."

Austria-Hungary, ostensibly acting in her own way, asks for an immediate armistice as a prelude to peace negotiations, based upon President Wilson's fourteen conditions. This is probably a subterfuge. Does Austria-Hungary know what those conditions mean?

To all enemies alike the path lies open. Bulgaria set the example. Germany may cease hostilities whenever she is ready. We are willing to accept her unconditional surrender—that, but nothing less whatever. Definitions come afterward.

A Taste of War

The tragic catastrophe at South Amboy, with all its colossal devastation, by our peace standards, is but the smallest nibble of real war as it is fought by millions in France to-day. In the Argonne, in Picardy, our troops hourly face shellfire aimed not by chance fate but by the cunning of an expert enemy. What happened once or twice or a dozen times in the blazing ruins in New Jersey is a commonplace of attack and defence in the modern battle.

Small as our taste of war is, the object lesson is there for each of us. If we had thought we at home were really at war we know better. Ours is only the line of support, and we live so peacefully and afar that only in such a brief day of tragedy can we sense what it is that we are saved. Our burden is necessary and vital, but pitifully light by comparison. What are any dollars by the side of life in a South Amboy hell?

The most we can do is to realize this difference and do our allotted part with increased will and devotion. Here and now we buy more bonds, and still more, that we and our children and their children to come may be spared the invasion of such warfare upon American soil.

The Next Paul Chapman

The case of Paul Chapman comes up for final judicial settlement this week before the Court of Appeals. The law and facts of the trial present many doubtful points. It is altogether probable that the extraordinary conviction for murder in the first degree will be reversed. The power of the Court of Appeals, on the facts as well as the law, is plenary, and some mitigation of the sentence is confidently expected by counsel for the convicted boy.

At any rate, beyond and above stands the possibility of executive clemency, and in view of the overwhelming protest of public opinion it seems certain that Paul Chapman, a boy twelve days beyond his sixteenth birthday when the crime of which he was accused was committed, will not be put to death by the State of New York.

But what of future Paul Chapmans? Must they be subjected to the same chance of a miscarriage of justice, to the same torture in a death cell while the processes of law seek to effect a rescue, which should never have been necessary?

Counsel for Paul Chapman, Mr. Matthew W. Wood, has drafted the very simple amendment to the penal law which will prevent a repetition of this blot upon our system of justice. It is a conservative change in the law. Presiding Justice Hoyt of our Children's Court recommended the major portion of the change in his annual report of 1916. It would raise the age limit of the Children's Court from the sixteenth birthday to the eighteenth. It would also cut out of the law that anomalous and indefensible clause which wholly excludes murder in the first degree from the jurisdiction of the Children's Court, and thus preserves into this twentieth century in the State of New York the old common law rule permitting a child more than seven years old to be executed for murder.

We hope very much that our state legislators will investigate this proposed amendment, give it speedy consideration and push it to enactment. The existing law is in part a disgraceful anachronism and in part a measure of reform which our progressing sense of social justice and comprehension of child responsibility have outgrown.

Paul Chapman must be saved from a death that would disgrace the judicial record of the state, and in his name the blundering law which made his fate possible must be promptly remade against the future.

Open the Car Windows

The hermetically sealed streetcar is about as fine a breeding place for influenza and pneumonia germs as could be devised. The victims are neatly herded together. One well-equipped throat and nose can spread germs throughout a whole car. There is no fresh air to clear the horizon.

We understand that the Health Department has ordered the opening of streetcar windows. This is excellent sense, belated as it comes. Until yesterday the open window was a rare exception. Now more are down. And the next few days should see New York travelling in a good, stiff breeze.

Here is a job for our readers. Enforce the rule yourselves. Look about you in the next streetcar you enter, and if the windows are not open open them yourselves. Or complain to the conductor. To sit quietly in a closed car is just about as sensible as to clean a loaded revolver with the muzzle pointed at your head.

A Daily Reminder for Huns

When the last German army has surrendered and the Allies have marched up Unter den Linden, and Civilization is sitting in judgment upon the Hun, there should be ample attention devoted to the problem of making Germany, every last man, woman and child, understand.

Defeat, crushing defeat, is concededly the one best teacher of the hour. But beyond, in the years thereafter, even if some understanding of the world's condemnation of German crimes now forms in the German consciousness, will it grow and survive and keep future generations of Scheidemanns and Junkers and Crown Princelets in the path of decent humanity?

Indemnity taxes will do much. So may the marks of war, especially the sternly retributive acts which our friends in France are now wisely demanding.

But why not a series of commemorative statues as well? There is in Berlin the much vaunted Siegesallee, or Victory Avenue, which replicas of some forty-odd Fredericks and Williams and what nots of the Hohenzollern dynasty adorn. Suppose these obsolete statues were removed and in their place were erected, by order of the Allies, statues commemorating the truth of Germany's part in the war.

There should be a figure of Belgium, foully ruined and struck down. There should be a memorial to Edith Cavell, martyr to Teutonic savagery. The fate of Captain Fryatt should be equally set forth for future Germany to study and digest. America would ask for a Lusitania memorial; France for a symbol of all the brutal, cruel wrongs of a barbarians' invasion. There should be neither a softening of the record nor any wrath, but simply fact, written in enduring bronze to last through the ages.

Not in vindictiveness would such a record be placed on German soil. The aim would be to teach the truth and the truth alone. It is a vast and utterly unprecedented problem in penology that the world faces. A nation half beast, half man has broken loose. It must be captured and punished and restrained and, if possible, taught the enormity of its crimes—in short, civilized.

An Avenue of Defeat in Berlin might go far upon this errand of education.

Tenderness Toward Spies

As in every other munitions plant explosion, so now in the case of the Amboy disaster, it will perhaps never be known for sure whether the cause was accidental or deliberate. The evidence disappears in the wreck. But the possibility of its being the work of an enemy is neither remote nor obscure. It is, on the contrary, notorious.

We know that the German government organized in this country before the war a large and efficient mechanism for the perpetration of sabotage and outrage. We know something about the diabolical cunning with which such work is planned. We know actually in many instances how it was executed. One entire plot has been revealed, namely, the bomb plot against shipping. We know also what capacity there is in German character for atrocity.

And yet, notwithstanding all of this, the government's treatment of enemy aliens has been tender and sympathetic to the point of being maudlin. Mostly, they are allowed to go to and fro under nominal restraint, if any. They are put upon their honor to be good. It was only last week they were barred from the New Jersey coast, as far as Point Pleasant. They are never barred entirely. They are forbidden to enter war zones except by special permit. Hundreds of permits are issued.

Many spies have been detected by one agency of the government and then paroled by another. In one haul a score or more were taken from a plant where secret war work of the utmost importance was going on. They were evidently an organized gang; all of them were armed. A more sinister lot of spies could not be imagined. Yet not one of them was shot.

So far as we know, the situation is that a German spy cannot get shot. The worst that can happen to one apparently is to be sentenced to an internment camp. We have never heard of one paying the normal penalty. Spying for Germany is not a very hazardous occupation—not nearly so hazardous as a job in a munitions plant.

In Flanders Fields

Two poems have by common consent been accorded preëminence among the verse inspired by this war. These are "The Soldier," the unforgettable tribute to his native England, by Rupert Brooke, who died at Gallipoli, and "I Have a Rendezvous With Death," by Alan Seeger, which rendezvous the young American unflinchingly kept on a battlefield of France.

There is a third poem, with which our readers are familiar, worthy to rank with these two, a poem that embodied in verse the white hot ideals of a man with whom literature was not a vocation but an avocation. "In Flanders Fields" came from the pen of Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian physician of distinction. The poem was written in a hospital close behind the front in the little leisure that was his between the demands of his desperately wounded patients. He died in his own hospital, a victim of pneumonia. "In Flanders Fields" was reprinted in these columns shortly after its first publication in England. There are still constant requests for its text, and we give its brief stanzas again:

In Flanders fields the poppies grow,
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; while in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Unheard amid the guns.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunsets glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe.
To you from falling hands we throw
The torch. Be yours to bear it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies blow
In Flanders fields.

The poet left no hint as to the source of his inspiration, but there is little doubt that he found it in the legend that the poppies of Flanders bloom more crimson and plentiful when they spring above the graves of fallen soldiers. Mention has been made again and again in this war of the poppies that have ensanguined the fields of Flanders after they have known the scarlet dye of human life blood. Correspondents who commented on the profusion with which this flower, with its suggestive hue, covered the ground were only repeating an observation made frequently in the centuries that have seen this region the battlefield of Europe. As far back as the battle of Landen, fought between the English and French in 1693, the phenomenon was noted. An Englishman, visiting the battlefield the following summer, described in a letter home the spreading waves of poppies on the field that was yet strewn with the wreckage of battle. Macaulay, writing in his history of that historic struggle, made the letter the basis for the following paragraph:

> The next summer the soil, fertilized with 20,000 corpses, broke forth into millions of poppies. The traveller who, on the road from Saint Tron to Tirlemont, saw that vast field of rich scarlet spreading from Landen to Neerwinder could hardly help fancying that the figurative prediction of the Hebrew prophet was literally accomplished, that the earth was discharging her blood and refusing to cover the slain.

After Waterloo the poppies again spread their crimson coverlet above the dead. The blossoms, marked in the centre with the sign of the cross, which legend says symbolizes the blood which dripped into them from the pierced feet of Jesus, have had much cause since 1914 to blow between those other crosses "row on row." War takes our best, it has been so often said; and the pity is that those who first lifted the torch could not live to see its light beginning to shine with a surer radiance. Let it be hoped that it is given to the poet soldier surgeon and those who sleep with him under the crosses, rude wooden and velvet petalled, to know that the poppies have not bloomed in vain in Flanders fields.

War Names in the News

Chardon-Vert	shar-daun*-vare
Fléville	flay-veel
Faubourg d'Isle	fo-boor-deel
Cuvillers	ku-veelay
Marvaux	mar-vo
Tourcoing	toor-kwan*
La Bassée	la-bassay
Grand Pré	gran*-pray
Fresnes	frane

* Nasal n.

War Songs

By Joyce Kilmer

Joyce Kilmer, who was killed in action on the Picardy front on August 1, left a considerable amount of unpublished material. These three posthumous bits are reprinted from "The Bookman" for October. His collected works, verse and prose, together with a brief biography, five unpublished poems written in France and a number of his letters from the front, are to be published in a memorial volume by the George H. Doran Company this autumn.

I—Water-Color

PUSHING my way through the chattering throng of my brown-clad mates to the rail of the troopship, I look at still water, greasy and opaque. A touch of sunlight makes it splendid with rainbows, a great prismatic expanse, beautiful, more beautiful than clear water could be. Broken oars shatter the rainbow, bringing a black clumsy rowboat close to our ship's side. Around the black boat the rainbow settles. The rower rests his oars and lifts graceful entreating arms. He wears pale blue overalls. In the stern of his boat is a little girl in a cardinal cloak. On her head is one of the caps that make the French sailors look so gay and gentle, a flat, round, blue thing with a red pompom. She claps her hands when cooks lean through the portholes and throw loaves of bread to her father.

II—Breakfast

I MAY breakfast in either of two ways. I may, as I pass a steaming field-kitchen, hold out by its long handle a shining aluminum basin. John Wilkert will put into it a big ladleful of rice, and Leo Maher will pour golden syrup over it. Also, before I leave the line I shall have three long strips of broiled bacon and two thick slices of white bread, and a canteen cup full of hot, sweet coffee. The breakfast room is a meadow or the roadside across from the barracks. There is good company, hungry and mirthful. And over our heads noisy battalions of crows manœuvre, advancing, retreating, hoarsely shouting down to us news of what awaits us beyond the frozen hills.

Or I may go to the House by the Fountain. Pierre's permission is over, so he will not come in from the stable to smoke my tobacco and tell me of life and death in the trenches. Grandpère sits by the fire, now and then blowing it to flame by forcing his scant old breath upon it through a long hollow tube, and toasting for me a thick slice of war bread. Madame superintends the heating of the big iron pot of this morning's milk and the three-legged pot of coffee. Now my bowl—a little precious sugar in the bottom—is filled with hot milk. Madame deftly pours black coffee into it, and it becomes richly brown. I break my toast into it and eat eagerly—more eagerly than does demure little Francine, who sits opposite me, her schoolbooks beside her on the bench. She has large innocent brown eyes like her father's. Her hands are so tiny that I am surprised at her dexterity with the large pewter spoon. I am afraid that if I stare at her I shall embarrass her and make her spill café au lait on her immaculate pinafore.

III—Mirage du Cantonment

MANY laughing ladies, leisurely and wise,
Low rich voice, delicate gay cries,
Tea in fragile china cups, ices, macaroons,
Sheraton and Heppelwhite and old thin spoons,
Rather dim paintings on very high walls,
Windows showing lawns whereon the sunlight falls,
Pink and silver gardens and broad kind trees,
And fountains scattering rainbows at the whim of the breeze,
Fragrance, mirth and gentleness, a summer day
In a world that has forgotten everything but play.

Fatherland

(From Poetry)

FOR what would a man die?
For what would a man be dead,
In April?—go down and lie
In a low bed,
And when spring was passing by
Pull the covers over his head?

. . . .

Do men love Fatherland
So that they die for these:
Night in blue valleys and
The breakers of blue seas;
Clouds marching, caravaned,
And star-acquainted trees;
Cities time's made gray
And talkative and wise;
Hills so old they may
Watch pain with patient eyes;
Young mountain tops that play
At touching the skies;
The heavens, like a bent hand;
The brown earth underneath?
Are these his Fatherland,
For which man stops his breath,
Takes off his body, and
Goes down to sit with Death?

. . . .

For these what man would end
His own fire and lamp-light,
His thought that is his friend
And sits by his hearth at night;
His old, acquainted clothes
And the sweet taste of bread—
All of the things he knows—
Go down in the earth and be dead?

No, this is Fatherland.
For which men lifting up
Life, toss it on the sand
Like water from a cup:
A little land that has
Truth round it like a sea,
Where dreams are many as
The leaves are on a tree,
And stars grow in the grass
For men to touch and see.
A little, holy land
Within all hearts of men
The earth holds in her hand—
There he is citizen
With high, heroic things,
With faiths and loyalties,
With deeds that put on wings,
And songs that sing of these.

ELOISE ROBINSON.

THE MONEY YOU WERE GOING TO SPEND FOR THAT NEW WINTER SUIT

Singing at the Front

By Grace Hoyt,

An American singer who has been touring the American camps and hospitals in France

LAST week we gave a performance at the front for about 2,000 men who had been in the trenches since February. Our stage was a roped boxing platform in a beautiful grove; the piano was two tones below pitch, my sister sat on a soapbox to play; the army mules broke loose during one of our songs; the men festooned themselves in the trees over our heads, or stood in mud at least three inches deep, but we were all happy. The nights in this part of France are extremely cool, but we wear white gowns—the boys say it's a relief to see something other than a uniform—and we are so busy after our performance starts that we don't have time to feel cold. Then old people, children and mothers with babies—there are of course no young men—come to the out-of-door performances, and we always make it a point to do some of their folksongs so that they can sing the choruses with us.

We have brought over all the latest songs, and when we leave a camp almost every man has learned them. It is very wonderful to hear a thousand or more of our boys singing, especially when we realize how utterly worn out they must be from actual battle. Directly they hear music they seem to forget everything but their almost childish enjoyment of it.

An Open-Air Performance

Last night was another open-air performance. It was in the public square, the piano was backed up to the Hotel de Ville, the men sat on the flagging in a solid mass all around us, and the colonel of the regiment held the flashlight so my sister could see to play. Not a hat was on in the whole huge crowd, and you can't imagine with what really affectionate respect the men treat us.

It is different when we entertain near the front (we are away for a few days now, working for the waiting boys). There one is not allowed to use a light of any kind on the streets, and it's quite an experience travelling in a huge army automobile in the rain, through villages, past moving troops, and all in absolute blackness. We sang for General ———— and his staff at his headquarters in the banquet hall in a chateau. It was a huge room, but we had light from only three candles and the iron shutters were closely fastened.

The dust is beyond belief, and the boys on march are exactly as though they were made up with whitewash. If we are indoors when they pass we hang out of the windows to wave at them, and you ought to see their tired faces light up—even under the plaster-like dust—when they realize that we are Americans. If we are out we sit on the stone walls and the boys "fall out" in droves and are perfectly happy. In this part of France it is quite hilly, like New England, and the marching is tiresome and difficult, their packs are very heavy, and there is always the dust.

We have had two especially interesting experiences in a hospital, singing. One was at a small building used in winter for a school. We sang in the courtyard (without any accompaniment), and the men who were well enough to get about sat on the grass around us; the windows were all open into the wards so that those who could not get downstairs heard something of what was going on, at least. The doctors there are busy day and night and there is not one woman nurse to help them, nor have they an X-ray. We went in to see the boys—we were the only women who had been near there—very often, and I did so want to give them extra pillows and make them more comfortable.

Gayety in Hospital

The second hospital was where we entertained about 3,000 men. The "Ford" sprang a leak or something, so that we didn't reach the building (Y. M. C. A.) until almost half an hour later. That never happens—being late, I mean—with us, but we found the audience just as gay as possible. Hundreds were standing, hundreds were sitting in the windows. Many were in wheel chairs, the stage was full and the rest sat on benches without any backs. We entertained for over two hours. They wouldn't let us stop. They were quite the most enthusiastic audience we have ever had, I think, and how they did sing! We are going back there to sing probably twice a day in the wards from which the men could not come to us. At the end they crowded round the stage and shook our hands and thanked us until we nearly dissolved in tears. When we see all that we might have done we are ashamed that we were not here four years ago!

If you know of any one who hasn't given quite all he can to the war, tell him to please give any kind of an old piano to the first hospital of which I've written; you can't fancy the good it would do.

The dear old French people stop us on the streets, call us the "saviors of France," tell us how brave (?) we were to come, and kiss our hands. You can picture just about how much there is left of us by that time; it's almost too affecting to stand! We hope we shall never forget what we owe to our American boys who are here. The French, young and old, have nothing but praise for them, for they say they are always gentlemen. They are courageous, gay, clean and altogether the sweetest creatures one can imagine. We know, for aren't they before us in hundreds, day and night, almost always with children in their laps, always thoughtful and always respectful?

Pieces of Scripture

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Does William Randolph Hearst realize how much he resembles Gloster when he prints quotations from the Bible as a heading on his editorial page? Perhaps he didn't think we would see the resemblance and recognize him for what he is! But I know that you can be depended upon to see it.

"But then I sigh, and, with a piece of
Scripture,
Tell them that God bids us do good for
evil:
And thus I clothe my naked villany
With old odd ends stolen out of holy writ;
And seem a saint, when most I play the
devil."
—Richard III.

Perhaps with the flag and the Bible and a few more odds and ends we might not be able to recognize "Little Willie" at all if it wasn't for the fact that what a man is always is greater than his veneer of pretence.

D.

New York, Sept. 29, 1918.

"The Times" Editorial

By Robert H. Murray

Special Cable Dispatch to The World

MEXICO CITY, Oct. 4.—Diligent use is being made throughout Mexico by German propagandists of "The New York Times" editorial "The Austrian Peace Overture," which said that "from Vienna has come the first veritable peace offer, and it comes in a form which the Allies may honorably accept in the confident belief that it will lead to the end of the war."

The Germans make it appear that "The Times" editorial represents the pacific sentiment of the majority of the people of the United States, France and England, and that the war is being prolonged because of the greed for money in the United States.

In an editorial to-day based upon "The Times" editorial, "El Democrata" says: "Were it not for vast quantities of money, troops, arms, ammunition and all kinds of battle implements that are providing for the continuance of hostilities, a peace conference would have taken place a long time ago. Several nations involved in the war have made frequent peace proposals, and the answer of the White House has always been 'No,' the stubborn negation that everybody knows.

"'The New York Times,' one of the leading newspapers in the United States, and which is credited with being the representative of the ideals of the Union and of the people, has just published an editorial that caused such alarm to the government as to cause it, by censorship, to restrict its circulation abroad, while at the same time the principal newspapers of London and Paris have openly expressed the opinion that Austria-Hungary's offerings must be considered. But the government of North America has declined to do so, and is following this line in absolute opposition to the views of these two nations.

"'Dollars are the sole incentive that accounts for protracting the slaughter as long as possible. The United States holds that peace is not a subject to be decided upon by poor, bleeding, heroic France which would have entertained peace conferences in order to quit fighting, and that neither is it a matter connected with the tenacious disposition of Germany to defend itself against the impending aggrandizement of England."

Awful Boldness

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The courage of the State of New York in the ejectment of alien school teachers is something sublime. Nothing like it ever has been seen on any European battlefield. Surely the news of it will move American soldiers to tears.

Teachers who even to-day are "alien teachers" are to be given "time in which to declare their intentions and take out citizenship papers." Thus says bold Thomas E. Finnegan, Acting State Commissioner of Education.

That's right, Mr. Finnegan! If the alien teachers still despise America, club them, and make them become citizens anyhow. We need a lot more such "citizens," don't we? Of course, they won't all sign up in order to save their good American pay. Oh, no! When they have "declared," they will be fine Americans, and can delightfully evade the law that was honestly intended to purge our schools of their presence.

Great, indeed, is the State Department of Education; also wise in the promotion of Americanism! W. T. HORNADAY.

New York, Sept. 26, 1918.